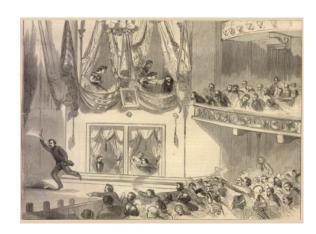
## The Aftermath of Lincoln's Presidency



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In his second inaugural address, Lincoln called for all Americans to:

...bind up the nation's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow, and his orphan...

His peace-making words made him many enemies. Southerners hated him for destroying their way of life. Northerners felt the South needed to be punished for forcing the country into war.

Five days after General Lee's surrender, Mary and Abraham were attending a play in Washington (on April 14, 1865). They did not know about a pending conspiracy, to take place that night, where assassins were assigned to kill the President, the Vice-President and the Secretary of State. The Southern-backing conspirators thought that by murdering the country's top officials, the Union would be in shambles.

During the middle of the play, Lincoln's body guard slipped away. Historians still debate why he did that. John Wilkes Booth used this opportunity to get into the President's box.

As the audience laughed at a line in the play, Booth fired a single shot at Mr. Lincoln. The ball, from Booth's single-shot Deringer, entered the President's head, below his left ear. It traveled through his brain, stopping behind the President's right eye.

Abraham never regained consciousness and died the next day. Booth was subsequently caught and hanged. The other alleged "Lincoln Conspirators" were also caught and hanged.

Abraham Lincoln has gone down in history as a poor boy, without formal education, who suffered with severe depression throughout his life, and still became perhaps the greatest U.S. president. He never gave-in to hatred, but instead asked his fellow citizens to work together "with malice toward none, and charity for all."

And—as he so fondly hoped—government of the people, by the people and for the people has not perished but still thrives.

## See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

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## See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

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